

## **Citizens Clean Elections Commission**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **STATE COMMISSION TO DEFEND VOTERS' VOICE WILL APPEAL 11<sup>TH</sup>-HOUR COURT RULING**

**PHOENIX, (January 21, 2010)** – The Citizens Clean Elections Commission, the state agency that oversees Arizona's publicly financed election system, will file an immediate appeal with the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals to protect matching funds that are a key component of the voter-approved law.

Federal Court Judge Roslyn Silver ruled that matching funds are unconstitutional and will not be available during the 2010 election cycle. Her ruling comes after some candidates had already collected \$5 donations to qualify for Clean Elections funds. Already, nearly 90 Arizonans have qualified as Clean Election candidates for the 2010 cycle.

"Matching funds add viewpoints to the marketplace of ideas," said Todd Lang, Executive Director for the Commission. "These funds enable voters to hear both sides of the story and add to a robust debate. I am confident we will win on appeal."

Candidates who qualify for Clean Election funds are awarded matching funds if a privately funded opponent(s) exceeds a specified threshold of campaign cash. In addition a participating candidate may receive matching funds based on independent expenditures made either against their campaign or for their opponent(s). The funding is capped at three times the original spending limit.

This ruling does not affect the Citizens Clean Elections Commission's primary function of funding candidates. Participating candidates will receive their initial funding amounts without interruption.

#### **About the Citizens Clean Elections Commission**

The Citizens Clean Elections Act, which was passed by voters in 1998, created a new campaign financing system that provides full public funding to qualified candidates who agree to abide by Citizens Clean Elections Commission guidelines. Candidates for statewide and legislative offices are eligible to participate in the public funding program.

To qualify for funding, participating candidates gathered \$5 qualifying contributions from constituents who were registered voters. Participating candidates also adhere to strict spending and contribution limits and agree to attend required workshops and debates.

For more information visit the Citizens Clean Elections Commission website: [www.azcleanelections.gov](http://www.azcleanelections.gov)

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